

Sept. 13, 2006

David Valenstein
 Environmental Program Manager
 Federal Railroad Administration
 1120 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
 11th Street
 Washington, D.C. 20590

FRA-2006-26099-448

10/10/06
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Dear Mr. Valenstein:

As a citizen of the United States and
 Rochester, MN, I am writing in opposition
 to the FRA granting the D, M & E
 Railroad a loan (2.5 billion)

As you know, Undersecretary of Transportation,
 Jeffery Shupp, has asked us to voice
 our opinion.

I feel the D, M & E does not have the
 ability to repay this loan. The value of the
 company is not sufficient to warrant such
 a loan. In reality, this is not a loan
 it is a "gift."

The safety record of this company (D, M & E)
 is not worthy of such a massive taxpayer
 subsidy. Please include my comments as
 an official part of this matter.

I am also concerned the damage this project will due to the Mayo Clinic and our two large teaching hospitals. Over 40% of the population that live very close to the track - live in the city of Rochester.

Finally, there are many people who live in residential areas that are very close to the tracks. Their property values will be negatively affected by this proposed plan.

So, please do not grant this 2.5 billion loan to such an unworthy company with such a horrible safety record.

Sincerely,
Mary Pat Adams
1507-22 H.N.W
Rochester, Mn. 55901
cc: President George W Bush
Senator Norm Coleman
Senator Mark Dayton
Congressman Al Gutnecht

September 16, 2006

David Valenstein
Environmental Program Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
1120 Vermont Avenue NW
Mail Stop 20 Washington, DC 20590

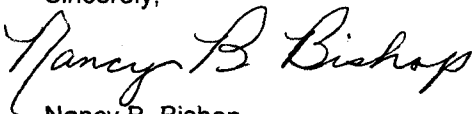
Dear Mr. Valenstein,

When Undersecretary of Transportation, Jeffrey Shane was in Rochester, MN on August 25, 2006, he requested public opinion on a federal loan in the amount of 2.3 billion dollars for DM&E railroad expansion. I am a 72 year-old widow who lives approximately 1 mile from the DM&E railroad tracks in Rochester. The tracks run through the heart of downtown. If expansion of the DM&E occurs, it will have a deleterious effect on my life, health and safety. I live on the "other side of the tracks" from Rochester's hospital emergency facilities. The idea of 34 (or more) trains speeding through Rochester each day, blocking cross streets for approximately 8 to 10 minutes each time, is frightening to me. Eight minutes can mean the difference between life and death in an emergency. Kevin Schieffer, president of DM&E claims the one and one-half to two mile long trains will carry coal as well as other products including some hazardous materials. DM&E has a terrible safety record. Reports of derailments are frequent. They claim the safety problems will be corrected if they obtain a 2.3 billion dollar loan from the federal government to rebuild the tracks. Why hasn't safety always been their priority? DM&E has been consistently lax in maintaining its rails; can we trust them to change? DM&E has been unable to procure private financing for expansion. No wonder. The company is worth 111 million dollars. It has already borrowed 233 million dollars from the government. How can it possibly repay an additional 2.3 billion dollar loan? I strongly oppose this loan.

Please allow me to express my heartfelt concern about the potential DM&E expansion. Consider the irony that the same railroad tracks that originally facilitated the transport of medical patients to the Mayo Clinic could cause its demise. Two major hospitals as well as many clinic buildings lie within a few blocks of the DM&E railroad tracks. A chemical spill caused by derailment could jeopardize the lives of hundreds of patients, staff members and other residents. DM&E is unwilling to consider a Rochester bypass. Why?

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Nancy B. Bishop
121 14th Street, NE #701
Rochester, MN 55906-7063

CC:
President George W. Bush
Senator Norm Coleman
Senator Mark Dayton
Congressman Gil Gutknecht

September 14, 2006

David Valenstein
Environmental Program Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
1120 Vermont Avenue NW
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr Valenstein:

As an American citizen, taxpayer, and resident of Rochester, I am writing to ask that the Federal Railroad Administration deny the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern (DM&E) Railroad's loan application.

As you know, the Undersecretary of Transportation, Jeffrey Lane, has asked us to share our thoughts on this issue.

Much of Mayo Clinic, the largest private employer in Minnesota, and the largest medical institution in the world, is within a few hundred feet

of the DME tracks. With as many as 34 trains going through Rochester this will certainly be of concern to our Patients that come to Mayo Clinic & our emergency crews.

Another big concern I have is the \$2.5 billion "loan". I would say it is a gift from our taxpayers! They have no intention of paying this back!

In addition, they have the worst safety record! Do I want my tax money to go to a company like this? No!

Thank you & please include my comments as an official part of this matter.

Sincerely,

Sharon Capeman
1512 NW 27 St
Rochester, MN 55901

SEPTEMBER 14, 2006

DEAR MR VALENSTEIN:

I DON'T THINK THAT THE DME SHOULD BE GIVEN A 2.5 BILLION LOAN WHEN ITS THE FACT IT CAN'T BE PAID BACK.

ROCHESTER HAS OVER 1.5 MILLION NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL VISITORS EACH YEAR, WITH HOTEL AND RESTAURANT INDUSTRY THAT GENERATES 100 MILLION ANNUALLY. DO YOU THINK WITH HORRENDOUS NOISE, AIR POLLUTION AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION THAT THESE VISITORS MAY GO SOMEWHERE ELSE?

SO I WOULD ASK THAT THE DOKOTA, MINNESOTA & EASTERN RAILROAD'S LOAN BE DENIED. LETS MAKE ROCHESTER BETTER, NOT TEAR IT A PART.

SINCERELY,

JERRY COPEMAN

1512 22 ST N.W.

ROCHESTER, MN 55901

CC PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

SENATOR NORM COLEMAN

SENATOR MARK DAYTON

CONGRESSMAN GIL GUTKNECHT

Mildred Cottrell
612 12th Avenue SE
Rochester, MN 55904

September 18, 2006

David Valenstein
FRA
Environmental Program Manager
1120 Vermont Avenue NW
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein

I am contacting you in regards to the DM&E application for a loan to expand its railroad line through Southern Minnesota, in my case Rochester.

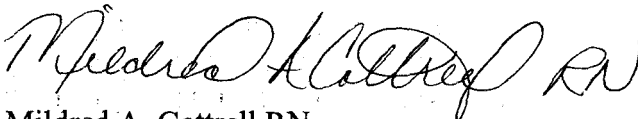
I feel with DM&E's track record it would be an unwise and unsound business decision to approve a loan for them. I also don't believe the tax payers of Minnesota should wind up picking up the slack for the DM&E. I am one of those Minnesota taxpayers and I live in Rochester, MN.

I am an RN for the Mayo Medical Center at Rochester Methodist Hospital in the Orthopedics Post-Surgical Department. I am in fear of what it may mean having the DM&E going through our fine city at high speeds carrying hazardous materials. If there should be an evacuation of patients and people in the area of the Rochester Methodist Hospital alone it could be catastrophic. Many of our patients on the orthopedic unit are unable to make it the distance it would require to get them to safety and there isn't enough equipment available to transport the number of patients we have at the Rochester Methodist Hospital.

So I sincerely hope you take into serious consideration our patients when you consider giving the DM&E a loan to expand its rail line.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mildred A. Cottrell RN". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Mildred A. Cottrell RN

DAVID Valenstein
Environmental Program Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
1120 Vermont Avenue N.W.
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC. 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein:

As an American citizen and taxpayer, I am writing to ask that the Federal Railroad Administration deny the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern (DME) Railroad's loan applications. From what I've heard they will have a hard time even paying it back. As you know, the Under Secretary of Transportation, Jeffrey Shene, has ask us to share our thoughts on this issue.

I am greatly concerned that the terms of this loan are not in the interests of the United States or her citizens

Sincerely

Gregory Dukart
106 14th Ave. NE.

Rochester MN. 55906

cc: President George W. Bush
Senator Norm Coleman
Senator Mark Dayton
Congressman Gil Gutfnecht

September 14, 2006

David Valenstein

Dear Mr Valenstein,

As an American citizen and taxpayer and
Rochester resident, I am writing to ask
that the FRA deny the DM&E loan application.

There are a number of reasons for my
thoughts:

1) We live within three blocks of a RR crossing
and are fearful of a potential accident involving
hazardous materials.

2) We have many friends living in the high rises
Four, Central, Park, Northgate and Charter House are also
at risk.

3) Mayo Clinic patients, by the hundreds, are also
in the same dilemma.

Thank you, and please include my
comments as an official part of the matter.

Sincerely Edward F. Fujara
Edward F. Fujara
108 11th Ave SE

SEPT 14

DAVID VALLENSSEN
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM MGR
FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION
1120 VERMONT AVENUE NW
MAIL STOP 20
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

DEAR MR VALLENSSEN —

PLEASE STOP THE ^A2.3 BILLION DOLLAR
LOAN BY THE FRA TO DM-E RAILROAD.
IT IS INSANE TO GIVE A LOAN THIS SIZE
TO A COMPANY THAT PUTS SUCH A LOW
PRIORITY ON SAFETY. DM-E'S PREVIOUS
^A233 million LOAN SHOULD BE SEEN AS
A PREDICOR OF HOW THIS NEW MONEY
WOULD BE USED. — MOSTLY FOR DEBT
SERVICE — NOT TO MAKE THE RAILROAD
SAFER. / AM GRAVELY CONCERNED ABOUT
WHAT THIS PROJECT WILL DO TO THE
NATIONAL TREASURE THAT IS THE MAYO CLINIC.
IT WOULD BE ECONOMIC DISASTER.

VIRGINIA L. GERAMAS
4150 WILLOWCROFT
NW
ROCHESTER, MN 55901

September 13, 2006

David Valenstein
Environmental Program Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
1120 Vermont Avenue NW
Mail stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein,

As an American citizen and taxpayer, I am writing to ask the Federal Railroad Administration to deny Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern (DM&E) Railroad's loan application.

As you know, the Undersecretary of Transportation, Jeffrey Thare, has asked us to share our thoughts on this issue.

I am concerned that DM&E is likely to own the loan and the taxpayer will have to pay the loan, the danger of hazardous spills to Rochester and the downtown area. As a Mayo Clinic employee, this is a huge concern for the clinic and the patients. Also, DM&E does not have a good safety record.

Sincerely,

Andrea Haugland,
1516 22nd St. NW
Rochester, Mn. 55901

CC - President George W Bush
Senator Norm Coleman
Senator Mark Dayton
Congressman Bill Huelskamp

Donald E. Hueb1
14641 LOMA AVE
WASECA, MN
56093

David Valenstein
Federal Railroad Administration

Dear Sir:

In regards to DM & E
railroad expansion.

- ① What will happen to the
energy with all this coal burning.
I have read that the Arctic sea ice
cover has been declining at 9.8% per decade
- ② The safety of all the trains going
through Rochester not only spillage but
track blockage. If it had to go there
should be a alternative route.

③ There is nothing sure of
repayment of this loan
I respectfully ask your consideration
to stop this railroad expansion
Sincerely
Donald E. Hueb1

September 12, 2006

David Valenstein
Environmental Program Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
1120 Vermont Avenue NW
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Federal Railroad Administration Loan to DM&E

Dear Mr. Valenstein,

The Undersecretary of Transportation Jeffrey N. Shane has asked us to share our thoughts on the issue of a federal loan to DM&E.

I oppose it.

The BearingPoint group found that even with the most optimistic the DM&E would not be able to keep up with loan payments. Even though the DM&E will not be required to offer collateral and they will be given a six-year window before they would have to start making payments on the loan. **Bad business.**

DM&E received \$233 million FRA loan to make improvements in their safety; however, DM&E's overall safety record got worse, not better. **\$233 million and it got worse?**

The railroad will look to the taxpayers at aide them when the accidents and spills start happening. **The question is not, will they happen, it's when then happen.**

The railroad is asking for taxpayer funds to support its project, but they have been unwilling to consider the real safety concerns raised by us, the citizens in the communities that DM&E expects to pay for its expansion. **After a sure to happen accident or incident, I will be seriously ill or dead, I won't be able to send in tax dollars; you will have to send money to my family because I will not be able to support them any longer.**

If the Federal Government continues to grant these types of loans, it is certain the deficit will continue to grow and further burden the taxpayers.

David, stop this before it gets out of control. Make the DM&E accountable for their actions and projected actions.

Thank you for listening to my concerns,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tamra Kottke".

Tamra Kottke
1828 Fourth Avenue Southwest
Rochester, Minnesota 55902

CC:

President George W. Bush
Senator Norm Coleman
Senator Mark Dayton
Congressman Gil Gutknecht

CITIZEN HALL
21. 2nd St., N.W. #444
Rochester, N.Y.
55901

Re: endangered lives
accident waiting to
happen??

Dear Sir:

I am writing this note &
submitting the enclosure on
behalf of my brother, Karl
LOFGREN, a retirement resident (400
people)
residing @ 1 block from the
Railroad tracks. Brother Karl is
suffering from some medical problem,
is on supportive care and unable to
write due to a contracture of his arm.

This is written on his behalf.

Eric P. LOFGREN

Eric P. Lofgren

P.S. * Mrs. Karl LOFGREN is being "tube-fed"
and her children in Rochester are
North. All ambulance North-most
cross tracks. We are South living
a few blocks from hospitals. Some
people have waited 20 min
for trains to go South,

a

DM&E loan slated for final review

By BRADY AVERILL
baverill@startribune.com

WASHINGTON — An eight-year wait for an answer to whether the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad (DM&E) will be allowed to expand in southern Minnesota is almost over.

The Federal Rail Administration is collecting public comments on environmental impact statements for the project until Oct. 10. After the comments are reviewed and the administrator signs off, the agency has 90 days to approve or deny the \$2.5 billion loan for the DM&E. As soon as the clock begins, the administration can decide at any point, spokesman Steve Kulm said.

Farm and city leaders from throughout Minnesota went to Washington on Wednesday to ask the state's congressional

delegation for its support during the review's final days.

"This is so important to agriculture that we get a rail line that we can rely on," said Kevin Paap, president of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation.

Leaders contend that an improved and expanded rail line would be an economic boon for small communities. It would help lower the cost of coal, transport crops and bring jobs, they said.

"You've all heard of a ripple effect. This is not a ripple effect," said Robert Gervais, director of the Economic Development Authority in Tracy, Minn. "This is a splash. This is like dropping a rock in a 5-gallon pail of water."

The Rochester Coalition, made up of local and Mayo Clinic leaders, say otherwise. They expect to file a formal

THE ISSUE

The DM&E has requested \$2.5 billion to build a 280-mile line to Wyoming's Powder River Basin coal mines and reconstruct about 600 miles of track in Minnesota and South Dakota. The DM&E applied for the expansion in 1998 with the Surface Transportation Board and the loan in 2005. A comment period ends Oct. 10; after which the Federal Rail Administration will determine whether to grant the loan.

comment before the October deadline. The coalition is worried about additional train cars running through the town and potential spills.

The coalition said this sum-

mer that the DM&E was unsafe. It said that between 2000 and 2005, Federal Rail Administration reports show that the DM&E had 900 train accidents and incidents, which resulted in 24 deaths.

Last week, two Republican lawmakers, Sen. Norm Coleman and Rep. Gil Gutknecht, sent a letter asking the Department of Transportation to study how Rochester can be protected if the loan is approved. They expect to hear from the department within a week.

"We have serious concerns about a loan being approved before there's a plan to protect Rochester," Mayo Clinic spokesman Lee Aase said.

Brady Averill is a correspondent in the Star Tribune Washington Bureau: 202-383-0015

September 19, 2006

David Valenstein
Federal Railroad Administration
Environmental Program Manager
1120 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein:

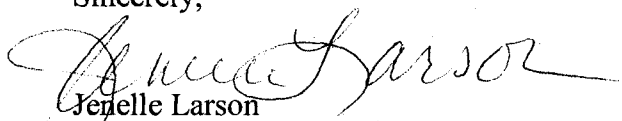
I would like to take the opportunity to respond to the loan application request made by DM&E. I have several major concerns that include:

- An inability to understand how their loan request can be considered under a program dedicated to Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation. DM&E is an organization that mocks those same qualities as they have proven to be anything but safe, accountable, flexible, or efficient.
- They have ignored valid safety concerns of communities including Rochester, Minnesota, which is a major economic driver in Minnesota and the upper Midwest. DM&E has proven to be inflexible and unwilling to negotiate a bypass and demonstrates a lack of concern for the general public and communities involved.
- The premise for the loan is to promote cheaper fuel and a boon to farmers. There is no evidence of a concrete plan that supports or outlines how these goals will be accomplished. In fact, early on to obtain the buy-in of smaller communities, there was significant talk about how the DM&E expansion would help farmers. More recently, there is acknowledgment that there isn't a plan or guarantee that this will even happen.
- The ethical issues inasmuch as the same people who oppose this plan will be forced into supporting, through taxpayer dollars, an enterprise that primarily benefits an individual businessman.

History would suggest that default of this loan is inevitable. It's time for the FRA to critically address concerns and be flexible, accountable, efficient, and safe with any support they give this request. Until DM&E can prove that they characterize these same values, the loan should be denied.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Jenelle Larson
26123 Steinbauer Drive
Minnesota City, MN 55959

Phone 507 689 4361
Email ejlarson@hbc.com

Dear Mr. Valenstein,

I am writing for myself +
my husband, Franklin Michael who is
blind. We have been citizens of
Rochester for many years +, of course,
are taxpayers.

We are completely opposed to a taxpayer-
paid ^{bill} \$2.3 billion loan to DM+E!

Mr. Jeffrey Shaw was here in August
of ~~this~~ this year + urged us to give our
opinion on the subject.

~~The idea of granting a~~ \$2.3 billion loan
to a railroad that has one of the worst safety
records in the nation is ludicrous! It is certainly not
worthy of such a massive taxpayer subsidy!

Jean Michaels
of Rochester

207 5th Ave. S.W.
Rochester, Mn. 55902

Sept. 20, 2006

Mr. David Valenstein
Environmental Program Mgr.
Federal Railroad Administration
1130 Vermont Ave. NW, Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein:

Mr. Jeffrey Shane, Undersecretary of Transportation asked concerned Rochester citizens to share our thoughts on the DME loan application.

As a citizen and taxpayer, I would request that you seriously reconsider this loan. I do not believe this loan is in the best interests of the US or citizens. We must consider US & world economy over a single industry. This company has not been forthcoming OR honest with its business dealings in recent months leading me to seriously question overall business ethics & practices.

In addition, even with the influx of \$233M, they failed to improve safety ratings. In fact they have one of the worst in the US. This project continues to demonstrate risk to taxpayers as well as health and safety of those along its tracks. We should not be forced to bear these negative impacts.

Thank you for your time and attention

Pat J. McAlexander

2804 Northern Slopes Ln NE, Rochester MN 55906

Larry & Hazel Melvin

From: Larry & Hazel Melvin [lahaz@pie.midco.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2006 1:28 PM
To: lahaz@pie.midco.net
Subject: FRA

David Valenstein and others considering granting DME a loan. Please deny the loan to the DME, for the following reasons. These reasons here are only some of the many concerns we and others in our community have.

Its unfair to railroad competitors to grant a taxpayer loan, while other companies find their own funding. The loan will hurt communities with a larger population base, like Pierre, Brookings, Huron, Rochester and others with noise issues, pollution, dust, traffic interruption, emergency services compromised, accidents at crossings and along the trackside. Nearby schools are dangerously close, as well as our hospital and medical facility, boys and girls club, state buildings, capitol building, football and baseball fields, homes and business's parallel the track, and DME will be hauling dangerous, potentially fatal materials when a derailment or accident occurs, jeopardizing the safety of everyone. Our town relies on tourism; all the motels are trackside, who will come stay more than once?

Coal can be processed without hauling it, such as gasification plants next to the coal site, and sending current instead of hauling something that is old technology. DME wants to haul it, so they can profit at all others expense. I question their ability to repay the loan, if new technology comes through and they can't make a profit. The 2.3 billion dollar loan is just part of the 7 billion they need to complete the project, and it is questionable if they can repay the 2.3 billion dollar taxpayer part, what about repayment to investors? Who gets paid first or not at all?

Please don't trust this company with our money. They might have convinced mayors and city council, with their(our) incentive money and threats to sign early, or risk not getting the best deal, but community people overwhelmingly don't want it. Our town and others alike have recently done media surveys to ask this very topic, and have proven this.

Farmers and ranchers have been mis-lead into believing they will benefit, but no contracts have been signed, and DME will and can haul coal if it is in their best interest. DME has been quoted as saying a multitude of different things that contradict what they have already said, to fit their objective, a loan should not be given to an applicant that lacks integrity.

The Burlington Northern have spent 100 million of their own money recently to upgrade and increase hauling capacity to take care of any additional demands on coal.

In conclusion, we are asking for a denial on the loan to DME, the harm it will do far outweighs any possible good that could come out it. Thank you for considering our recommendations,

**Larry and Hazel Melvin 09/20/2006
 1011 Wells Avenue
 Pierre, South Dakota, 57501**

Larry Melvin 9/20/06
Hazel Melvin 9/20/06

9/20/2006

September 18, 2006

David Valenstein
Environmental Program Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
1120 Vermont Avenue NW
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein:

The Federal Railroad Administration should reject the \$2.3 billion Railroad Rehabilitation and Relief Improvement Financing loan application and any other loan application from the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad for its Powder River Basin Project. American taxpayer money should not be risked on a private company with a very great chance of default. Professional analyses of its finances and safety record show that this company does not deserve or warrant the loan.

The Surface Transportation Board did not adequately assess the damage this project would do to Rochester, Minnesota, home to 40% of the people living along the entire route. The project would deter patients from coming to the Mayo Clinic, leading to economic failure throughout the city and loss of one of the finest medical institutions in the world.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the recent mailing from the FRA and the request from Undersecretary of Transportation Jeffery Shane for public opinion on this matter .

Sincerely,



Emily Myers
802 Sierra Lane NE
Rochester, MN 55906

CC: Senator Coleman
Senator Dayton
Congressman Gutknecht

September 19, 2006

Dear Mr. Valenstein;

Please do NOT allow the DM&E to bring its proposed 150 to 200 car coal train through Rochester, Minnesota!

The trains will come only one block from the Mayo Clinic buildings and the hospitals. Ambulances would be stopped for trains and would be unable to reach medical care for patients when support may be critical.

Increased noise and pollution, as well as possible dangerous spills would adversely affect thousands of medical and support staff and thousands of people who come from thousands and all over the world for life saving treatments and care!

PLEASE know there are realistic ways to circumvent the city!! These plans would solve the problem and be more cost effective than "one grade separation."

Thank you
Dorothy Naylor-Mark
Dorothy Naylor-Mark
211 2nd St NW

MAX - 10001

Sept. 20, 2006

Mr. David Valenstein,

Dear Sir:

Please STOP the DM+E railroad loan and the planned traffic increase in Rochester, Minnesota.

We live very near to the track, between the track and Mayo Clinic in a retirement complex, and so much of our safety depends on reduced traffic not increased traffic on unsafe rails which are poorly maintained. If a spill occurs, the city is gone!

Cross over streets would be blocked for hours each day and access to the clinic and St. Mary's Hospital would be prevented.

Taxpayers should not pay for a \$2.5 billion loan to a private company. How will such a loan ever be repaid? The alternate route south to Iowa should be used!

Sincerely, Mildred Roth (Mrs Arnold)
MILDRED ROTH, 211-2nd. St. NW, APT. 2112,
ROCHESTER, MN 55901-3101

9/18/06

David Valenstein

Environmental Program manager

1120 Vermont Avenue NW, Mail stop 20

Washington DC 20590.

Mr. Valenstein:

Thank you for the opportunity to write to you concerning the DMAE application for \$2.3 Billion. As a small business operator, it's been really hard since 9/11/01 to be profitable... in fact, I haven't needed to pay any income taxes now for 5 years - because I haven't made any income! I feel \$2.3 billion loan by the government to a private entity is really beyond excessive to enable a private firm to expand.

Please Reconsider The Impact Environmentally & Financially.
Paul Sadler

EVELYN M. TORSHER

1403 WEATHERHILL RIDGE CT. SW

ROCHESTER, MN 55902

David Valenstein
FRA
Enviromental Program Manager
1120 Vermont Ave NW
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Valenstein,

My name is Evelyn Torsher. I am 11 years old, and I live in Rochester, Minnesota. I would like to talk to you about the DM&E train track you're proposing to put in my town. I am against it for the following reasons.

- ❖ I go to St. John the Evangelist Middle School. We already have to practice fire drills, tornado drills, and lockdown drills (a minimum of 5 each per year). If we had to practice (and possibly do in real life) train-crashing-into-our-school-drills, we would go crazy!
- ❖ My uncle was in a severe car accident in Guatemala. Eventually, he arrived here to get help from the Mayo Clinic. He later went to Charter house, and stayed and recovered there for about 3 months. Visiting him there, I got to know the wonderful staff and patients there. If they, too had a toxic waste or train-crashing-into-Charter House kind of disaster, many of those wonderful people may very well die, which I do not want to happen.
- ❖ The peacefulness at Charter House will be ruined with trains going back and forth right in front of the building.
- ❖ The Mayo Clinic may be forced to pay millions of dollars for this to happen-and they shouldn't have to pay for something this bad to happen to our community.
- ❖ My dad is doctor at Mayo. If the Clinic spends all that money on the trains, many doctors may be let go, including my dad. If that happens, I will have to move away from Rochester, where I've lived for almost my entire life.
- ❖ They're asking the government, also, to pay a huge part of the money for this-and the government has already spent so much money that they don't have, that even my grandchildren will be paying off debt-and like I said, I'm only 11!

I really hope you will consider these issues which I have brought to your attention. I very strongly disagree with this proposal. I have also called these issues to the attention of Gil Gutknecht, Andy Welti, and Senator Norm Coleman. I have also discussed them with my friends. Thank you very much for listening.

Sincerely,

Evelyn M Torsher

1403 Weatherhill Ridge Court, SW
Rochester, MN 55902

September 22, 2006

David Valenstein
FRA
Environmental Program Manager
1120 Vermont Avenue, NW
Mail Stop 20
Washington, DC 20590

RE: DM&E application for expansion through Rochester, MN

Dear Mr. Valenstein:

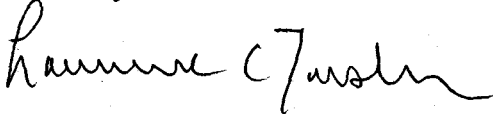
I am writing you as a concerned citizen of Rochester as well as a taxpayer who is tired of seeing tax dollars going to support businesses that would not function in any meaningful way without government support.

The current plan to run the DM & E railroad expansion through the city of Rochester, less than 5 city blocks away from schools, hospitals, nursing homes and internationally recognized research facilities is unwise. DM & E has offered no mitigation strategies that would realistically address the risks of derailment or the constant disruption of rapid frequent train traffic through the center of a busy vibrant community.

I am also concerned that they feel that the only way that the plan would progress is with a multibillion dollar loan. If the business plan is sound, why can they not interest private financing. I suspect this will evolve into another large subsidy for private industry.

Please review the application from DM & E in detail. Have them show you and the people of Rochester that they have a concrete mitigation plan. Have them share it with the community and be willing to put guarantees behind its performance. The nonspecific assurances we have received up until now just is not good enough.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Laurence C. Torsher", written in a cursive style.

Laurence C. Torsher

should be illegal.

I'm 78 years old and probably won't have to many years to put up with this nonsense; but I have lots of family and friends who will.

Please consider my concerns.

Sincerely,
Shirley Tarleck
412 S. Pierce Ave.
Pierre, S.D.,
57501

Quincy, IL,
Sept. 14, 2006

To Whom It May Concern;

I'm writing to voice my concern about the DM&E Railroad running all these dirty coal trains through our city.

I live on the north side of the tracks and the hospital, ambulance and medical facilities are on the south side - what is going to happen in an emergency?

I feel our Mayor and City Commissioners should have stood up against this! What we don't need are 40 trains per day rumbling through our city.

My other concern is this: Senator John Thune was a lobbyist for DM&E. When he got elected he inserted an add-on to the transportation bill to give DM&E a low interest loan to proceed.

This should be considered a conflict of interest, and in my opinion

Dear David Valenstein,

I'm writing to you to strongly oppose the DM&E proposal. I do not think our government should financially support this proposal. Not only because the DM&E will destroy the peaceful life of Rochester residents and threaten the safety of the patients at Mayo Clinic, coal as a long-term ~~exp~~ energy source is debatable. Pollution damage by burning coal is a serious problem that threaten the environment. Although research on this topic has been conducted for many years, a solution has not been found. Other resources for energy use have been studied and proposed, such as using natural energy. Therefore, it is not a good idea for the government to spend so much money on this project, especially with the ~~poor~~ DM&E's poor safety record. Thank you for your consideration

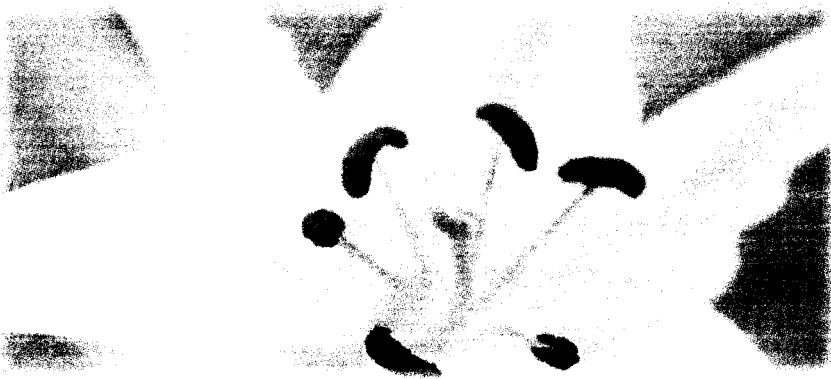
9/19/06

Dear Mr. Valenstein,

Please don't allow the
DME railroad to pass
many trains through
downtown Rochester, MN.

I live in a high rise,
along with several
hundred other residents.

We are within a block
of the tracks. We are afraid
of a spill of hazardous
material. What would



we do? We need your
protection. Thank you
for your consideration.

Yours truly

Helen Zimmerman

Helen Zimmerman

211-2nd St. N.W. #902

Rochester, MN.

55901

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9-17-06

DEAR SIR:

I URGE YOU WITH ALL
SINCERITY TO NOT MAKE
A 2.5 BILLION "LOAN"
TO THE DM & E RAILROAD,
BECAUSE IT WILL NOT BE
A LOAN, BUT A GIFT.

IT WOULD NEVER BE
PAID BACK. OUR DEBT
IS COMPLETELY OUT OF
SIGHT NOW. IF A PRIVATE
ENTERPRISE CANNOT WORK AS
MANAGED THEN FORGET
THE IDEA.

Thank you for this information

Spud Beckstrom
716 LANSING
MANKATO MINN. 56003